

**SUMMARY REPORT
OF
TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN IN UKRAINE**

JANE RUDD, PH.D.

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INTRODUCTION

This document provides a summary of the findings from two studies commissioned by Winrock International and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to assess trafficking prevention efforts in Ukraine. The studies were designed to determine the ways in which young women are drawn into potential trafficking situations. Conducted through the Trafficking Prevention Program in Ukraine, one study was carried out through the Women for Women Centers in Lviv, Donetsk, and Dnipropetrovsk, and the second study was conducted by the Ukraine Institute of Social Science (UISS) of the population-at-large.

The study at the Women for Women Centers consisted of an evaluation of all girls and women attending trainings for the first time at the three Women for Women Centers during the week of November 13, 2000. A total of three-hundred and twenty-seven women, ages 12-51, were administered questionnaires. Four groups of girls and women are compared: 1) teens in Internats (85 girls); 2) teens in secondary schools (74 girls); 3) teens in technical schools (76 girls); and 4) adult women (92 women).

The UISS study conducted a random sample of girls and women from five different oblasts in Ukraine. Two-thousand forty-eight girls and women ages 12-30 years were interviewed. Four groups of girls and women are compared: women and girls from the general population, ages 12-30 (1,520 girls and women); 2) teens in Internats (315 girls); 3) businesswomen who travel abroad (primarily market women) (103 women); and 4) sex-workers (in Ukraine) (110 women).

This document will compare and contrast findings from both studies and make recommendations for future trafficking prevention efforts. While both studies asked similar questions, due to the different nature of the two samples, responses were not always comparable. A more in-depth understanding of the findings from both studies can be obtained in previously published reports through Winrock International.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Finding: One of the major findings in both studies was that girls and young women had minimal financial resources or support; with both study populations, lack of financial resources strongly influenced girls and women's decisions to go abroad under conditions that leave them open to being drawn into trafficking.**

This was an expected finding and the most commonly believed reason girls and women choose to go abroad and risk a trafficking situation. The International Organization for Migration (1998), study also noted the relationship between poverty and the desire to go abroad. In fact, 76% of families in Ukraine do not have enough to support themselves (Gender Analysis of Ukrainian Society, 1999). More and more families must now rely on domestic production of food (which has soared from 29% to 56% in recent years) in order to feed themselves (The Family in Ukraine, 1999). Sixty-two percent of the

unemployed in Ukraine are women (Vlasenko, Vinogradova and Kalachova, 2000). In this study there were similar findings as to the level of poverty. With the population at large group, it was shown that 64% of girls and women live on or below the poverty level; 25% are hardly surviving. With the Women for Women Center population, two thirds do not regularly receive their salary and do not have enough to support themselves. They compensate for this lack of resources by working at two jobs and borrowing money. It is no surprise that girls and women will consider acting precipitously in order to obtain basic life necessities.

The Women for Women Centers have a major goal of helping women to improve employment opportunities. The job skills trainings at the Women for Women Centers have been highly successful in introducing concepts of Western business practices to women attending trainings. Under the Soviet system, many women never had to look for employment and so are not used to describing their professional skills to a prospective employer. The Centers start with such issues as resume writing and interviewing techniques. Women then require training in current information technology capabilities, such as computer competency. The Centers provide it. The Centers have become so well known for their excellent training of women that potential employers now call the Centers when they have an open position. They do so because they will be assured of a competent prospective employee.

Recommendation: Trainings for jobs skills need to be expanded.

This is particularly critical for girls and young women graduating from secondary schools, Internats or technical schools. Trainings need to be offered in secondary schools, Internats and technical schools, possibly as part of the curriculum. While trainings are currently offered in the school setting, this effort needs to be greatly expanded. This is not possible with the current level of staffing in the Women for Women Centers.

Recommendation: An additional staff member needs to be hired at each of the Women for Women Centers to work exclusively in the schools in an effort to greatly expand trainings in the schools.

Having such a person would ensure consistent job skills trainings in secondary schools, technical schools and Internats. An employee with this singular, dedicated purpose would be especially helpful with developing and maintaining relationships with Internat staff, a key to providing access to Internat students. With approximately 4,000 female children living in Internats, this is a population that needs critical attention.

B. Finding: In the Women for Women Center study, supportive relationships with grandmothers, parents and the emotional comfort of financial security were correlated with being a deterrent to considering going abroad to work.

Unfortunately, emotional support was minimal for girls and women in both studies. Lack of emotional support was an issue for one fifth of the women in the UISS study.

Anecdotal evidence abounds of parents who have gone abroad to work, leaving their children in situations far worse than if they had remained in Ukraine.

Recommendation: Parents need to be assisted in order to provide adequate emotional support to their children.

Groups for parents, arranged through the Women for Women Centers, and in conjunction with a related family agency, could provide support and information and access to resources that would enable parents to maintain consistent involvement with their children, even in very difficult circumstances. These groups, once established, could become autonomous peer support groups, with minimal staff involvement and expense.

Recommendation: For young girls whose parents are unavailable, a mentoring program is often cost effective and has been proven to assist teens to develop their potential, in spite of economic, familial and societal obstacles (United State Department of Education, 2000).

There is anecdotal evidence that informal mentoring takes place with students in Internats and relatives from their extended families and even neighbors. Such mentors need to be recognized and supported in their efforts. In country Peace Corps Volunteers may be a source for additional mentors.

C. Finding: Another significant finding was that, in both studies, there was a high rate of current or previous emotional, physical and sexual abuse; there was a positive correlation between women experiencing abuse and the consideration to go abroad to work in situations that leave them vulnerable to traffickers.

Fifty percent of adult women in the Women for Women Center study have experienced violence and 20% remain in a violent situation (See Table 1). The percentages of women who experienced violence were less in the population-at-large sample; nevertheless, they were high (See Table 2).

Women are often physically unable to work as a result of violence they experience in the home; medical attention is frequently needed. The Ukraine Ministry of Interior Affairs reported that in 1999 alone, 1,227 women were killed; 1,215 women were the victims of premeditated grievous bodily harm; 1,256 women were sexually assaulted; and 6,522 women were the victims of sexual perversion (Vlasenko et al., 2000, p. 29) (No information is given on the perpetrators of these crimes). Currently, “assault on one’s wife does not fit into any category of criminal actions within the Ukrainian Criminal Code” (Gender analysis of Ukrainian Society, 1999, p. 222).

Table 1. Violence Against Women and Teens: Women for Women Center Sample.

	<i>Experienced Violence</i>	<i>Currently Experiencing</i>	<i>Physical Violence</i>	<i>Sexual Violence</i>	<i>Emotional Violence</i>	<i>Would Consider</i>
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		<i>Violence</i>				<i>Going Abroad if Experienced Violence</i>
Teens in Internats	26% (22 teens)	7% (6 teens)	27% (23 incidences)	14% (12 incidences)	16% (14 incidences)	Yes, from physical and sexual abuse
Teens in Secondary School	8% (6 teens)	0%	9% (7 incidences)	0%	4% (3 incidences)	Yes, from physical abuse
Teens in Technical School	22% (17 teens)	7% (5 women)	17% (13 incidences)	4% (3 incidences)	33% (25 incidences)	Yes, all categories
Adult Women	50% (46 women)	20% (18 women)	51% (47 incidences)	22% (20 incidences)	85% (78 incidences)	Yes, except women <u>currently</u> experiencing violence

Table 2. Violence Against Women and Teens: Population-at-Large Sample

	Physical violence	Sexual violence	Emotional violence
Women & girls	12%	12%	34%
Internat girls	9%	5%	18%
Business women	15%	19%	63%
Sex-workers	53%	54%	76%

The results of both studies, demonstrate clearly that abuse is as serious a push factor as is lack of emotional or financial support. Research has shown that women who have experienced prior abuse are at risk for exposure to further abusive situations (Russell, 1986; Rudd & Herzberger, 1999). It is also known from previous studies in the United States that women and girls who have experienced previous abuse are disproportionately represented in the prostitute population (Schaffer & DeBlassie, 1984; Silbert & Pines, 1981; Simons & Whitbeck, 1991). Often this is related to young girls and women fleeing an untenable violent situation in their homes and finding themselves on the street with no means of financial support, thus ending up in prostitution. This phenomenon was confirmed among the population-at-large group. Women who are prostitutes in Ukraine (N110) had witnessed their fathers physically abusing their mothers (50%), and verbal abuse between their parents (51%); 69% experienced physical abuse from one or both parents and 25% of women prostitutes were threatened with being ejected from their family homes when they were minors. All of these parameters of abuse are at alarmingly high levels, more so than the other groups of girls and women (See Table 3).

Table 3. Levels of Familial Abuse: Population-at-large study.

	Father physically abusing mother	Verbal abuse between parents	Physical abuse from parents	Threatened with ejection from family home
Women and girls	14%	14%	6%	25%
Girls in Internats	27%	18%	7%	26%
Businesswomen	18%	13%	7%	30%

Sex-Workers	50%	51%	25%	69%
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In an effort to educate women about violence prevention, women are brought together with other women and Women for Women Center staff to learn about commonalities in each other's lives and to discuss issues in an open way that they may not have previously done. This discussion often takes place in trainings on human rights that lead many women to take clear and decisive positions regarding their domestic or employment abuse situations. Many of the women maintain contact with each other, once they have concluded using the services of the Centers. They even form 'alumni' groups that assist the Centers to help other women. Many women even become trainers at the Women for Women Centers.

Providing peer-matched trainers who have first-hand experience of the situations of the women attending the Women for Women Centers enables the trainers to be empathic and the women to be highly receptive to their messages. It is known that "the facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learner" (Rogers, 1971, p. 219, cited in Rappaport, 1981). The Women for Women Centers embody this concept. Beardsell (1994) believes the women's ability to incorporate the messages of trainings depends on the personal qualities of the trainers. "Empathy, positive regard, genuineness, and concreteness may have more "prevention effects" than the content of the trainings" (p.12).

The staff at the Women for Women Centers is extraordinarily dedicated. The commitment and long hours and creative outreach at all three Centers have meant that each Center provides help to women far outside of the cities in which the Centers are located. Their capacity to transform women's lives from being participants in the trainings to actual leaders of the trainings ensures a domino effect in conveying the message that women are indeed better off staying in Ukraine. The general attitude that Ukraine has 'little to offer' changes as women see possibilities before them. For the most part, the teen and adult women that were interviewed for the Women for Women Center study wanted to stay in Ukraine, near their families and in their country and saw the Women for Women Centers as a way to successfully do so.

Recommendation: Both the human rights trainings and access to lawyers needs to be continued and expanded upon.

Much of the lawyer's time in the Women for Women Centers is in educating and supporting adult women to deal with domestic abuse.

Recommendation: A shelter system that would include both violence prevention and employment skills trainings is the next needed step in the process of providing an alternative to going abroad.

Since fully 50% of adult women (Women for Women Center study) have experienced abuse, this need is critical in order to prevent women from fleeing abroad.

Shelters could also be used for women who are returning from a trafficking situation. Since the numbers of women who are considering or have already gone abroad (who are in contact with Women for Women Center lawyers) is increasing, this need continues to increase.

Recommendation: Fund additional staff so that frequent, systematic trainings can be offered in the school settings.

With teen women, the problem of abuse from family members and/or boyfriends is even more acute as they are more reluctant to discuss their abusive situation, and there are few resources available to them. Violence prevention trainings offered by the Women for Women Center staff are well attended by teens. Funding for these trainings needs to be increased as there are waiting lists at all three centers. This is especially critical for students in Internats who lack ready access to the Women for Women Centers. While the Women for Women Center staff have worked diligently to provide trainings in the Internats, access is complicated by bureaucratic difficulties. With 27% of teens in Internats experiencing physical violence (Women for Women Center study), this is a heightened at-risk group in danger of being lured into trafficking.

D. Finding: Women need to be educated as to what constitutes abuse and the overall deleterious effects of abuse, and the relationship between abuse and the increased potential to become involved in a harmful trafficking situation.

There was evidence in both studies of lack of knowledge of abuse and its effects. Previous studies confirm that once a girl or woman has experienced abuse, they are more likely to be exposed to future situations of abuse. This phenomenon is related to a number of factors, including lack of knowledge of how to protect herself from abuse, general feelings of worthlessness and patterns of withdrawal and isolation (Russell, 1986; Rudd & Herzberger, 1999).

Finding: The reactions from abuse in turn affects girls and women's ability to be employable.

Not only are girls and women in Ukraine dealing with a lack of employment skills, they, if they have experienced abuse, may be more reluctant to put themselves in an employment situation (Shepard & Pence, 1988). This, along with women missing days at work due to current injuries, seriously compromises women's employability in Ukraine. Being less able to enter the job market and having less awareness of potentially dangerous situations can lead to more potential to being drawn into a trafficking situation. Therefore, the issue of abuse urgently needs to be addressed as a trafficking prevention issue and as an impediment to women's employment.

Recommendation: Educate women as to the *linkage* to current and past abuse and the heightened risk of being drawn into trafficking.

Much of the discussion and prevention efforts around the issues of trafficking have focused on economic issues and the lack of employment for women in Ukraine. While the economic issues are validated in these studies, the issue of abuse, equally as serious, now needs to be related to women going abroad and risking involvement in trafficking. This message needs to be incorporated in future public service announcements about trafficking, along with information on where to receive services. The message needs to also be included in the Women for Women Center trainings.

E. Finding: The overall trafficking prevention effort has been effective in alerting girls and women to the dangers of trafficking.

It has been successful through the medium of general public service announcements, and, even more so, through the efforts of NGO's. In the population-at-large study 38% of girls and women (general population) knew of dangers regarding trafficking. However, only 10% of students in Internats (population-at-large study) knew that you could not work abroad with a tourist visa, demonstrating a continued need for trafficking prevention information.

Finding: Girls and women who are aware of NGO's know more about the dangers of trafficking.

However, in the population at large study, as few as 7% know about NGO's that assist women who have experienced trafficking. Interestingly, those 7% knew more about the dangers of trafficking than did the general population. As well, the higher the educational level and the larger the geographic region, the more girls and women know about NGO's (and hence the dangers of trafficking).

Recommendation: The first step is to develop an awareness of the Women for Women Centers.

This can only come after expanding staff personnel, as the center staff are already working at full capacity. Women for Women Centers do not advertise for fear of being overwhelmed. Four more centers have been established in Ukraine in Chernivtsi, Kherson, Rivne and Zhytomyr. These numbers need to continue to increase.

F. Finding: Women and girls who actually come to the Women for Women Center trainings know even more of the dangers of trafficking (see Table 4), and there is a higher knowledge level of the dangers of trafficking following just one training.

Table 4. Knowledge of Anti-Trafficking Messages: Women for Women Center Sample.

Teens in Secondary		Teens in Technical		Adult Women	
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School		School			
<i>Pre</i>	27-80%	<i>Pre</i>	59-89%	<i>Pre</i>	47-93%
<i>Post</i>	54-91%	<i>Post</i>	87-100%	<i>Post</i>	83-98%

This is all good news and a strategy that should be continued and expanded upon.

Finding: There is now also a need to expand the information campaign to help women to incorporate the dangers of trafficking into their *belief* system.

This was shown to be a critical issue because the adolescent girls who were part of the Women for Women Center study did not demonstrate a *behavior* change after one training. For example, after one training, technical school teens did not decrease their desire to go abroad and Internat and secondary school students actually increased their willingness to risk going abroad (See Table 5).

Table 5. Would Consider Going to Another Country: Women for Women Center Sample.

Teens in Internats		Teens in Secondary School		Teens in Technical School		Adult Women	
<i>Pre</i>	36% (31 teens)	<i>Pre</i>	34% (25 teens)	<i>Pre</i>	34% (26 teens)	<i>Pre</i>	36% (33 women)
<i>Post</i>	39% (33 teens)	<i>Post</i>	45% (33 teens)	<i>Post</i>	34% (26 teens)	<i>Post</i>	26% (24 women)

There are several reasons for the teens' responses. 1) When participants come to the trainings, they have a strong desire to go abroad; 2) Some participants come to the trainings hoping to find *safe* ways to go abroad, rather than *alternatives* to going abroad which the trainings are trying to show participants; It may be that when students attach most of their hope to escaping abroad, information alone is not sufficient as a deterrent. It is well known in the field of health education that "information models neglect important parts of the equation, like what the behavior means to the person and how the behavior is socially reinforced" (Woodworth, 1995, p. 8). 3) While one training increases *knowledge* of the dangers of trafficking, several trainings may be required in order to effect *attitude* and *belief* changes, which in turn lead to *behavior* change. Greenberg (1976) states that increasing self-esteem, reducing powerlessness and social isolation are as important as the message when trying to help teens make hard choices. These concepts are an important part of the trainings. Staff also incorporate women or even teens into the trainings that have been successful in Ukraine, perhaps even a graduate of an Internat who is attending a Women for Women Center. Since most of the teens will attend 4-5 trainings, it is likely their behavior will gradually shift.

Recommendation: Measure the desire to go abroad following a series of trainings.

The trainings that were measured in this study are the first trainings teens and women attend. Since most teens and women attend four to five trainings, it would be helpful to measure the desire to go abroad following a series of trainings. This would demonstrate *attitude* and *belief* changes, not simply *awareness* of the dangers of trafficking. According to Carstens & Julia (1999), “attitudes and self-perceptions are more effectively addressed and potentially altered when people *experience* a new reality rather than when they are told that they ought to think and act differently” (p. 56). The trainings are conducted based on this and other empowering perspectives, and demonstrate that, after the initial knowledge of the dangers of trafficking (through public service announcements and the initial training) a more effective means of influencing behavior is through subsequent trainings, where real connections are made and have the potential to endure and lead to change. The positive side to this finding is that almost every teen or woman who took the training wanted to return for another training. Additionally, very few women showed consideration of going abroad precipitously after the first training.

G. Finding: For women who received an offer to go abroad, most offers came from friends or relatives.

In the population-at-large study, 14% of the girls and women (general population) had received offers to go abroad, often in the restaurant and entertainment business, both occupations that can easily evolve into trafficking situations. Four percent of students in Internats, 47% of sex-workers, and 59% of businesswomen had received offers. For women who had actually worked abroad, most offers came from friends or relatives. Fifty-two percent came from friends or acquaintances; 18% came for relatives.

Finding: In the population-at-large study, there were only 14 women who acknowledged working abroad in the sex-business.

It is difficult to trust this number as few women would admit to having done so. In the Women for Women Center study, 18 adult women would consider going abroad to work in the sex-business, and only if they desperately needed income or were fleeing a violent situation (question was not asked of students). The only deterrent was a high educational level.

Recommendation: Emphasize that offers to go abroad (that could result in a trafficking situation) come mainly from friends and relatives.

While it is common knowledge among trafficking prevention staff that friends and family can draw women into a trafficking situation, the awareness of offers from friends, family and acquaintances to work abroad that could lead to a trafficking situation needs to be stressed in prevention efforts.

H. Finding: Girls as young as eleven are vulnerable to trafficking.

The population at large study demonstrated the highest risk of entering a trafficking situation was among girls age 18 to 25. However, 38% of girls ages 12-17 desire to go abroad to work under conditions that could lead to a trafficking situation; while they may not have the wherewithal to get themselves situated abroad, they are in need of prevention efforts before the opportunity to go abroad presents itself.

In the Women for Women Center study, 45% of teens in secondary schools, 39% of girls in Internats, 34% of teens in technical schools and 26% of adult women desired to go abroad. As stated, age was less of a factor than lack of emotional or financial support or presence of violence. The average age for adult women was 23, so certainly it is clear all ages from 11 to 30 are vulnerable. The older the person, the less vulnerable she is to being drawn into a trafficking situation.

Recommendation: In order to achieve the most effective prevention effort, it is advisable to begin directing the trafficking prevention messages to girls as young as eleven.

I. Finding: In the Women for Women Center study the numbers of *successful* job placements and violence prevention efforts were not consistently tracked.

Recommendation: The centers need additional staff to track the level of success of their programs.

Some suggestions for tracking information are:

- a. How many women find employment following participation in a job skills training.
- b. How many employers contact centers for positions and how many of these positions are filled;
- c. What salary do women get following job skills trainings versus what they had been getting;
- d. How were the incidences of abuse decreased; how many legal actions were taken.
- e. How many women are deterred from going abroad and ending up in a trafficking situation.
- f. How many women are counseled regarding going abroad.
- g. How many family members are counseled while the woman is abroad or when she returns.
- h. How many women have been helped to resettle when they return to Ukraine from a trafficking situation.

The development of a staff position that would gather this information at all three centers is imperative.

CONCLUSIONS

The population-at-large study and the Women for Women Center study confirm each other in that girls and women in both studies indicated increased willingness to go abroad and risk a trafficking situation if there was poverty and/or violence in their lives. The study demonstrates the success of the Women for Women Centers in violence and trafficking prevention and in increasing job skills. By all accounts, women who attend the Women for Women Centers are more able to find employment, decrease violence in their lives and stay in Ukraine with an improved quality of life for themselves and their families. The larger the number of girls and women that can be reached, the fewer will risk trafficking situations. Not only do the Women for Women Center staff teach trafficking prevention, they help improve girls and women's overall quality of life, which in the end can enable girls and women to remain in Ukraine.

There is reason to believe that the prevention model used in Ukraine can be successfully applied in other Eastern European countries. Educating women about the dangers of trafficking through public service announcements and then providing more in-depth community based trainings through the Women for Women Center's model is visible. Data from other Eastern European countries indicates serious economic and violence issues for women (Watson, 1993), similar to those in Ukraine. Hiring women who are leaders in the communities to administer and staff the centers leads to a dedicated, motivated, talented, and caring group who strive to ensure quality service to the girls and women who come in need.

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